

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

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DRAFTED BY ARA/MGT:CWGROVER:MCH

APPROVED BY M:LDEAN BROWN

ARA-LA:JBKUBISCH

ARA-LA:HWSHLAUDEMAN

ARA-LA/CAR:JRBURKE (DRAFT)

SCA:RSOMERVILLE (DRAFT)

----- 123615

R 151842Z JUL 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, CGEN, DR

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO RE-OPEN CONSULATE AT SANTIAGO DE
LOS CABALLEROS

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 2714

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY BROWN
AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH

1. THE DEPARTMENT HAS GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO
YOUR IMAGINATIVE AND WELL REASONED PROPOSAL TO RE-OPEN
THE CONSULATE AT SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS. WE AGREE
THAT YOU HAVE MADE A COGENT CASE AND WISH WE COULD GIVE
YOU A FAVORABLE RESPONSE. UNFORTUNATELY, A NUMBER OF
FACTORS OF SOME IMPORTANCE ARGUE AGAINST REOPENING AT
THIS TIME.

2. THE CLOSING OF THE CONSULATE IN SANTIAGO APPEARS TO
HAVE BEEN PARTLY MOTIVATED BY THE NEED TO BRING ABOUT
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PERSONNEL ECONOMIES (OPRED) AND THIS CONTINUING

OBLIGATION REMAINS WITH US. ASSUMING THE BUREAU ACCEPTS YOUR FORMULA FOR REPROGRAMMING WITHIN COUNTRY (AND WE THINK YOU ARE UNDERESTIMATING THE VISA OFFICER NEEDS OF A RE-OPENED SANTIAGO), THE MINIMUM PERSONNEL REQUIREMENT SET FORTH IN YOUR MESSAGE CALLS FOR ONE NEW AMERICAN AND THREE NEW LOCAL POSITIONS AND, FRANKLY, WE DO NOT HAVE SUCH UNCOMMITTED RESOURCES IN THE SYSTEM.

3. THERE ARE OTHER ELEMENTS WHICH CONCERN US. SANTIAGO IS ONLY TWO HOURS AWAY FROM SANTO DOMINGO BY A GOOD ALL-WEATHER HIGHWAY. GRANTING THE GROWING INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE NORTH COAST, THE COMMERCIAL ARGUMENT WOULD APPEAR TO BE A QUESTION OF FUTURE PROSPECTS RATHER THAN WHAT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED AT THE PRESENT TIME.

4. ON THE CONSULAR SIDE, THE DEPARTMENT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE IN EVERY CASE, IN FACT IN MANY NOTEWORTHY CASES, TO LOCATE OUR OFFICES IN AREAS OF MAJOR TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT. OUR POLICY RATHER IS TO OFFER REASONABLE ACCESS TO SERVICE AND, IN THIS REGARD, SANTO DOMINGO IS RELATIVELY CLOSE AND, AS NOTED ABOVE, WELL CONNECTED WITH THE NORTH SHORE. THE SAME ACCESS IS AVAILABLE TO VISA APPLICANTS AND, INDEED, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE RECENTLY INAUGURATED CONSULAR FACILITIES IN SANTO DOMINGO WERE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO ACCOMMODATE THE CURRENT LOAD AND THE NEAR TERM GROWTH FOR THE ENTIRE REPUBLIC. WE WISH TO PROVIDE GOOD SERVICE TO BOTH AMERICANS AND DOMINICANS BUT WE MUST FACE THE FACT THAT OUR RESOURCES ARE THIN AND WE HAVE TO WEIGH CAREFULLY HOW TO SPREAD THEM TO MAXIMIZE THEIR UTILITY.

5. ALTHOUGH NOT OVERRIDING, FINANCING CANNOT BE IGNORED AS A CONSIDERATION. TO BE SURE, THE FUNDS LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE TO THE BUREAU IN FY 75 ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO ONGOING ACTIVITIES. MOREOVER, WE HAVE BEEN PUT ON NOTICE THAT THE FY 76 PRESENTATION, NOW IN PREPARATION, WILL BE EXAMINED WITH GREAT CARE FOR POTENTIAL SAVINGS, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSULAR OFFICES, ESPECIALLY THOSE RECENTLY CLOSED, MUST BE DEFENDED WITH UNUSUALLY STRONG NEW JUSTIFICATIONS. IN OUR OPINION, YOUR PRESENTATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARGUES MORE FUTURE TRENDS THAN CURRENT ESSENTIALITY.

6. FINALLY, THE QUESTION IS LESS WHETHER THE RE-OPENING IS IN OUR INTEREST THAN WHETHER, GIVEN THE INCREASED DEMANDS ON OUR RESOURCES, THE DEPARTMENT CAN GIVE A HIGH ENOUGH PRIORITY TO THE VENTURE. LOOKING AT THE HEMISPHERE AS A WHOLE, WE RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE THAT WE DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT REASON TO PUT SANTIAGO IN THE FY 76 BUDGET.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE HAPPY TO REVIEW THIS PROPOSAL NEXT
YEAR IN PREPARATION FOR THE FY 77 SUBMISSION. KISSINGER

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